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A facsimile of the
1850
CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS
AND FEE BILL
of the first
MEDICAL SOCIETY
IN SAN FRANCISCO



with a Prefatory Note by
Carey S. Bliss



LOS ANGELES
Zamorano Club
1980

PREFACE

The San Francisco Medical Society was organized in late June, 1850. Its brief and stormy existence left little or no impact on the city. By October of 1850 the first San Francisco Medical Society had ceased to exist.

This facsimile of the eight page constitution, by laws and fees of the society is made from the original in the Huntington Library, the only copy recorded in Greenwood's *California Imprints 1833-1862* and the National Union Catalogue. Howard S. Mott listed a copy in a catalogue he issued in July, 1971. Mr. Mott informed me that his copy, priced at \$1500, was sold to the National Library of Medicine. The Huntington copy was a gift to Mr. Huntington by George H.F. Nuttall in May, 1924. Mr. Nuttall was the son of Dr. Robert Nuttall, one of the early members of the Society. A brief manuscript note about the senior Nuttall written by the son appears on page five. Of the thirty-two founding members of the Society only eight of them are listed in the 1850 San Francisco directory which was published September 1, 1850. Obviously, the 1850 directory was not a very accurate listing of the residents of the Bay City. A check of the 1852 directory records only three of the doctors still residing in the city. By 1860 the count still remained at three doctors, including Nuttall.

The stumbling block which apparently broke up the Society was the Fee Bill listed on pages 7-8 of the pamphlet. This schedule of charges for various professional services lists fifty-three separate fees and the money to be charged for each. Some of them are even high in these inflationary times. But doctors are an independent lot; they just didn't want to be bound by a fixed schedule of fees. The minute book records only meetings of the Society between June and August, 1850. The last sentence in the minute book reads "Adjourned to next Tuesday evening August 13, 1850." Money was the "root of all evil."



CONSTITUTION,

BY LAWS AND FEE BILL

OF THE

SAN FRANCISCO MEDICAL SOCIETY.

ORGANIZED JUNE 22, 1850.

SAN FRANCISCO:

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE CALIFORNIA DAILY COURIER,
MONTGOMERY ST., NEAR THE CUSTOM HOUSE,

1850,

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY.

PRESIDENT . . .	THEODORE DIMON, M. D.
VICE PRESIDENT .	STEPHEN R. HARRIS, M. D.
SECRETARY . . .	WILLIAM A. GROVER, M. D.
TREASURER . . .	" "
LIBRARIAN . . .	" "

STANDING COMMITTEES.

I. ON METEOROLOGY OF SAN FRANCISCO.

Drs. Smith,
Gilbert,
Haine,

II. ON MEDICAL TOPOGRAPHY OF CALIFORNIA.

Drs. Megquire,
Hulson,
Thorp,

III. ON DISEASES OF CALIFORNIA.

Drs. Tewksbury,
Sawyer,
Merritt,

IV. ON MEDICAL LAWS AND EDUCATION.

Drs. Rogers,
Nott,
Le Batard,

V. ON FINANCE.

Drs. Hill,
La Court,
Parsons,

VI. ON CREDENTIALS.

Drs. Thorp,
La Court,

Drs. Smith,
Merriitt,

VII. ON FEE BILL.

Drs. Smith,
Rogers,
Megquier,

Drs. Haine,
Tewksbury.

CONSTITUTION.

To support a high standard of professional qualification and conduct, to distinguish the profession from all quackery, to promote union of feeling, a common interest and concert of action upon all professional subjects, without which, that position and influence the profession should be entitled to, cannot be obtained;—the medical men of San Francisco unite themselves in an association and adopt the following Constitution:

ARTICLE I.—STYLE AND MEMBERSHIP.

SECT. 1. This association shall be known and styled as "*The Medical Society of the City and County of San Francisco.*"

SECT. 2. It shall be composed of all such regular Physicians and Surgeons, residents of the County of San Francisco, who are qualified as required by this Constitution, and who shall subscribe their names to this Constitution; and of such honorary members as the society may from time to time elect.

ARTICLE II.—QUALIFICATIONS TO MEMBERSHIP.

SECT. 1. All persons desirous of becoming members of this Society shall exhibit to the committee on credentials, hereinafter provided, a diploma from some regular medical institution, or a license to practice granted by such legal authority as requires a regular medical education, together with satisfactory evidence that such diploma or license was granted to the applicant.

SECT. 2. Upon satisfactory report of the committee on credentials and upon paying an initiation fee of five dollars, the applicant shall be admitted to the society by vote, and shall subscribe his name to the constitution.

SECT. 3. There shall be appointed a committee on credentials, of which the Vice President shall be ex-officio chairman. This committee shall consist of five, including the Vice President. They shall strictly examine all credentials referred to them and obtain satisfactory evidence that applicants for admission to the society, are rightful possessors of the diplomas or licenses they may present, and also, at the time of application, regular members of the medical profession.

ARTICLE III.—OFFICERS, THEIR ELECTION AND DUTIES.

SECT. 1. There shall be elected a President, Vice President and Secretary, and when directed by the Society, a Treasurer and Librarian, to serve for one year, or until their successors are duly qualified. These officers shall be elected by ballot at the Annual Meeting of the Society, and a majority of votes shall be requisite to an election. A vacancy occurring, may be filled in the same manner at any stated meeting of the Society.

SECT. 2. It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Society, and maintain order and decorum therein. He shall appoint an

and, unless otherwise ordered, and perform such other duties as the laws or the Society may direct. At the close of his official term he shall deliver an address to the society, upon some professional topic, and shall also present to the society, from time to time, in writing, such matters as, in his opinion, the attention of the Society should be directed to.

SECT. 3. In case of the absence of the President, the Vice President shall preside over the meetings of the Society, and in case of vacancy in the office of President, the Vice President shall be President for the balance of the term, and a new Vice President shall be elected. The Vice President shall deliver an address at the Semi-Annual Meeting of the Society.

SECT. 4. The Secretary shall keep correct minutes of all the meetings, publish all notices directed, conduct all the correspondence, unless otherwise ordered, collect all monies due the Society, and pay over the same to the Treasurer, when such officer shall be elected, and shall perform the duties of Treasurer until such officer shall be elected. He shall keep safely all papers read to the Society, which shall be ordered to be placed in the archives of the Society, filing them with date of order endorsed. He shall perform such other duties as the Society or the laws may direct. He shall report at the Annual and Semi-Annual Meetings upon the matters connected with his office.

SECT. 5. The Treasurer shall receive, monthly, from the Secretary, all monies in the hands of the latter belonging to the Society, giving his receipt therefor. He shall pay all orders made by the Society, which are certified by the Secretary and signed by the President. He shall report at the Semi-Annual and Annual Meetings the condition of the treasury, and have his accounts audited by the Finance Committee at the Annual Meeting. At any time the Society may call upon him to state the condition of the treasury, and cause an examination to be made of his books. He shall give such bonds as the By-Laws shall direct for the faithful performance of his trust.

SECT. 6. The Librarian shall have charge of such books, plates, models, pathological specimens and other similar articles, as shall at any time become the property of the Society. The care of the same, together with any further duties of the Librarian connected therewith, shall be provided for in by-laws to be made at the time of putting into operation the office. He shall report at the Annual Meeting concerning the matters committed to his charge.

SECT. 7. Should the Society so desire, the same member may be elected both Treasurer and Librarian.

ARTICLE IV.—MEETINGS.

SECT. 1. The Annual Meeting shall be held on the first Tuesday of June, at 2 o'clock, P.M. The Semi-Annual Meeting shall be held on the first Tuesday of December, at 5 o'clock, P.M.

SECT. 2. There shall be such stated meetings held as the by-laws may direct.

SECT. 3. The President shall call extra meetings at the desire of five members.

ARTICLE V.—MISCELLANEOUS.

SECT. 1. The code of ethics of the National Medical Association of the United States, shall govern the members of this Society.

SECT. 2. There shall be provided by-laws, rules of order, order of business and a fee bill, for this Society.

SECT. 3. This Constitution may be amended at any Annual or Semi-Annual Meeting of the Society, by a vote of two-thirds of the members present, and the subscribers to this Constitution shall be deemed to subscribe to any subsequent amendments.

NAMES OF MEMBERS.

	Where Graduated.	Year.
Stephen R. Harris,	New York College Physicians and Surgeons	- 1827-
Theodore Dinnon,	University of Pennsylvania,	- - - 1838
Peter Smith,	{ Transylvania University - - - -	- 1838
John La Court,	{ University of Pennsylvania - - - -	- 1845
J. B. Le Batard,	University of Ghent, - - - -	- 1832
Joseph Haine,	University of Paris, - - - -	- 1840
Hiram B. White,	University of Louvain, - - - -	- 1833
Samuel Sawyer,	Medical College of Vermont, - - - -	- 1847
John F. Thorp,	Harvard University, Cambridge, - - - -	- 1831
James E. Nott,	Ohio Medical College, - - - -	- 1844
Henry W. Jones,	University of Pennsylvania, - - - -	- 1832
Eugene N. R. Fiske,	Univer. of State of N. Y. Col. Phys. and Surg.	- 1847
Edward C. Franklin,	Harvard University, - - - -	- 1847-8
Matthew H. Hudson,	University of New York, - - - -	- 1845-6
Sylvanus B. Mills,	Berkshire Medical Institute, - - - -	- 1844
W. A. Grover,	University of Maryland, - - - -	- 1849
C. Pepin,	Berkshire Medical College, - - - -	- 1843
Robert Nuttall, M. D.	F. R. College Surgeons, Ireland.	
Robert McIntosh,	St. Andrews and Edinburgh, - - - -	- 1838
R. L. Hinckley,	Medical College, Maine, - - - -	- 1841
Jacob M. Tewksbury,	Bow. Med. Col., Maine, - - - -	- 1837
Samuel Merritt,	Bow. Med. Col., Maine, - - - -	- 1843
Thomas L. Megquier,	Bow. Med. Col., Maine, - - - -	- 1827
Frederick B. Bastone,	(deceased) Royal College of Surgeons, London,	- 1840
Charl. Precht,	Juliana-Maximilia University at Wurzburg,	- 1848
James Morison,	University of Maryland, - - - -	- 1846
Stephen Parsons,	Philadelphia College of Medicine, - - - -	- 1849
J. H. Rogers,	College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York,	1827-8
Joseph H. Hill,	University of Maryland, - - - -	- 1845
James Gilbert,	Royal College of Surgeons, London,	- 1835
James O. Parker,	Berkshire Medical Institute, - - - -	- 1840
R. Nelson,	Army Medical Board, - - - -	- 1843

B Y - L A W S.

SECT. 1. In the absence of the President and Vice President, a chairman may be appointed *ritu voce*.

SECT. 2. A quorum, for the transaction of business, shall consist of twelve members.

SECT. 3. Stated Meetings of the Society shall be held on the first Tuesday of every month, except June and December, at seven o'clock, P. M., from October to March, inclusive, and at half past seven, P. M., from April to September, inclusive.

SECT. 4. The following shall be the order of business:

1. Minutes of preceding meeting read.
2. Introduction of new members, report on credentials being first received and decided on.
3. Unfinished business.
4. Reports of committees.
5. Written communications and addresses.
6. Miscellaneous business.

SECT. 5. The following shall be the Rules of Order of the Society:

1. Every motion shall be reduced to writing, if desired by the presiding officer or a member.
2. When a member speaks, he shall confine himself to the question under consideration.
3. Two members rising to speak, the floor shall be given to the one who may not already have spoken on the same subject.
4. The yeas and nays may be called for by two members.
5. The presiding officer shall only have a vote in case of ballot, or when there is a tie.
6. In all other respects, the meeting shall be governed by parliamentary usage.

SECT. 6. Applications for admission shall be made at a stated meeting, referred to the committee on credentials, and shall not be acted upon until the stated meeting next succeeding. The applicant, when admitted, shall attach to his signature to the Constitution, the authority and date thereof from which he derived his qualification to practice.

SECT. 7. There shall be appointed the following standing committees, viz.:

1. A committee on Meteorology, of San Francisco and California.
2. A committee on the Medical Topography of California.
3. A committee on the Diseases of California.
4. A committee on Medical Laws and Education.
5. A Finance Committee.

SECT. 8. There shall be established by the Society, a Fee Bill, which shall govern the members in their charges for professional services.

SECT. 9. In case of absence of a quorum, or for other reason, meetings may be adjourned from time to time, not exceeding one day, (Sundays excepted.)

SECT. 10. These By-laws may be repealed, altered or amended, only at the Annual and Semi-Annual Meetings, and by a vote of the majority of the members present. The order of business, however, may be suspended at any time, by a vote of two-thirds of the members present.

FEE BILL

OF THE

SAN FRANCISCO MEDICAL SOCIETY,

For a single visit or advice in a case which no further visits are required, \$32 00

This is not intended to apply to those cases in which the physician is considered the regular medical attendant of the individual or family.

For each visit in a case in which the physician is in regular attendance, or for advice at his office, 16 00

Every necessary visit on the same day to be charged, whatever their number, at the same rate.

When detained, for each hour, 32 00

For a visit at a time appointed by the patient or his friends, during the day-time, 32 00

For a written opinion or advice, to a patient, \$50 to 100 00

For a visit at night, \$30 to 50 00

For a visit as consulting physician, during the day-time, 32 00

The same fee shall be paid to the attending physician, 32 00

For a visit as consulting physician, during the night, 100 00

In visiting distant patients, ten dollars to be charged for every mile from the city.

For visiting patients on board vessels in the harbor, 20 00

For an opinion involving a question of law, 150 00

For a post mortem examination in case of legal investigation, 100 00

For a post mortem examination made at the request of the family or relatives of the deceased person, 100 00

For a certificate of the state of health of an individual, 50 00

For vaccination, 32 00

For a case of ordinary labor, 150 00

For the application of the forceps, 300 00

For the operation of turning, 500 00

For reducing fractures and the first dressing, \$50 to 100 00

For reducing recent luxations, 32 to 100 00

For reducing old luxations, 100 to 200 00

For removal of stone from the bladder, 500 to 1000 00

For the operation for the radical cure of hydrocele, 100 to 200 00

For the operation for vesico-vaginal or recto-vaginal fistula, 500 to 1000 00

For the operation for phymosis or paraphymosis, 50 to 100 00

For the introduction of the catheter in ordinary cases, 16 to 32 00

For the introduction of the catheter in cases of obstruction, 100 to 200 00

For division of stricture of the urethra, 200 00

For the operation of tracheotomy, 500 00

For the operation for imperforate anus, vagina, &c., 500 00

For the reduction of hernia by taxis, 100 to 200 00

For the extirpation of tonsils, 100 00

For introduction of the stomach pump, in cases of poison,	-	100 to 150	00
For removal of foreign substance lodged in the pharynx or			
oesophagus,	- - - - -	100 to 200	00
For reduction of prolapsus ani,	- - - - -	50 to 100	00
For examination per anum or vaginam,	- - - - -	50 to 100	00
For introduction of a seaton or forming an issue,	- - - - -	22	00
For tapping in ascites or hydrothorax,	- - - - -	100 to 500	00
For the amputation of a leg or arm,	- - - - -	300	00
For amputation at the shoulder joint,	- - - - -	500	00
For amputation of a finger or toe,	- - - - -	100	00
For the extirpation of tumors,	- - - - -	100 to 1,000	00
For trephining,	- - - - -	1,000	00
For the operation for cataract,	- - - - -	1,000	00
For other operations of the eye and its appendages,	- - - - -	100 to 1,000	00
For the operation for aneurism of the subclavian carotid and			
femoral,	- - - - -	500 to 1,000	00
For the operation of strangulated hernia,	- - - - -	500 to 1,000	00
For the operation for hare-lip,	- - - - -	250 to 500	00
For the operation for fistula in ano,	- - - - -	300	00
For fistula in perineæ,	- - - - -	300	00
For the operation for hemorrhoids,	- - - - -	300	00
For palliative operation for hydrocele,	- - - - -	50	00
Incurvation of the nail,	- - - - -	50 to 100	00

In all other surgical operations, the charge to be discretionary with the surgeon.

For subsequent attendance in surgical cases, the charge to be proportioned to time occupied and trouble incurred.

In all cases of gonorrhœa and syphilis, a retaining fee of \$50 to \$100, to be required in advance, the subsequent charges to be graduated by amount of after attendance.

The accounts of physicians to be deemed due and payable immediately after services of physician are no longer required.

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